



**7 November 2011**

**For immediate release**

**Joint News Release**

**THE MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL OF SCOTLAND  
&  
THE CAIRNGORMS CAMPAIGN**

**Legal Challenge to Major New Town Being Built in the Cairngorms National Park**

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) has joined with the charity, the Cairngorms Campaign, to urge walkers, climbers, mountain bikers, skiers, bird watchers and others who enjoy the Cairngorms to donate funds to help finance a legal challenge to the decision of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) to adopt the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan 2010 (The Plan).

The Plan, if implemented, will result in the erection of 1,500 houses at An Camas Mòr on the east bank of the River Spey, opposite Aviemore; a mere 10 km from the summit of Cairn Gorm. The CNPA has also authorised 450 houses at three further locations within the boundaries of the Cairngorms National Park.

The MCofS and Cairngorms Campaign believe that the initiative for change within the Cairngorms National Park increasingly responds to the interests of commercial developers, in spite of the CNPA's primary aim being: "to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area".

The legal challenge follows a Public Inquiry which was held into the Local Plan, including the An Camas Mòr development. Subsequently the two Scottish Government Reporters stated: "the housing land requirement is overly generous in any context, let alone that set by the aims of the (Cairngorms) National Park" and "we conclude that the rationale for the calculation of the housing requirement is unconvincing". The CNPA chose to ignore these observations.

The appeal for funds is being made by the Cairngorms Campaign, the Scottish Campaign for National Parks and the Badenoch & Strathspey Conservation Group, which believe that the CNPA's policies should be challenged. A legal challenge against these policies will be made in the Court of Session in January 2012.

MCofS President, Brian Linington, said: "The MCofS is supporting this fundraising campaign because we believe that the CNPA decision in respect of The Plan and

specifically these developments is fundamentally flawed. The legal challenge is based on six grounds which argue that the CNPA acted unlawfully or against the findings of the Public Inquiry Reporters.”

At a time when Scotland's mountains and the Cairngorms National Park itself are under increasing pressure from wind farms and other developments, a new town in the middle of the Cairngorms National Park, with housing which will no doubt be unaffordable by most people's standards, is an unwarranted impact on the amenity of one of our national scenic areas.”

The three organisations taking legal action are small charities with modest resources. The estimated cost of the court case is £50,000 and requires substantial additional fundraising. The charities believe there are many individuals and organisations that care deeply for the integrity of the Cairngorms and who will support this appeal.

Details of how to donate are at <http://www.mcofs.org.uk/cairngormsdonate.asp>

**ENDS**

### **Notes for Editors**

**The Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCoFS)** is a membership organisation which acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering, with 11,000 active members involved in hill walking, climbing and mountaineering.

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**The Cairngorms Campaign** exists to stimulate public interest in the future of the Cairngorms area, to promote public appreciation of the character, beauty and ecology of the Cairngorms and to encourage and foster active conservation of the Cairngorms. It has a wide membership throughout the UK and is a member of Scottish Environment LINK, the umbrella organisation for Scottish conservation organisations. The Group is registered as a Scottish Charity, SCO5523. See [www.cairngormscampaign.org.uk](http://www.cairngormscampaign.org.uk)

**The Scottish Campaign for National Parks' (SCNP)** primary aim is to promote the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of nationally outstanding areas that are National Parks, or are appropriate to be designated as such, or are of sufficient merit to warrant special protection. This is manifest in our support for good stewardship of the country's best environmental assets and encouragement of environmentally sustainable methods of development, particularly within areas of national park potential. The Group is registered as a Scottish Charity, SC31008. See [www.scnp.org.uk](http://www.scnp.org.uk)

**The Badenoch & Strathspey Conservation Group's** objectives are to stimulate public interest in, and care for, the beauty, history and character of Badenoch & Strathspey; to encourage active conservation of the area through wise use; to encourage high standards of planning and architecture in harmony with the environment. The Group is registered as a Scottish Charity, SC003846. See [www.bscg.org.uk](http://www.bscg.org.uk)